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ABSTRACT

The goals of the Indian Education Project were to identify and discuss the involvement of federal, tribal, and state governments in the education of Indian children and to assist states in fulfilling their responsibilities in Indian education. A task force and other interested legislators, educators, and tribal representatives met regularly throughout the 20-month project to discuss data gathered from prior task forces, court records, seminars, meetings, and a survey of Indian education in five target states: Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. Besides the final report the task force issued five others dealing with the involvement of federal, state, and tribal governments; problems in need of resolution; selected programs and practices; policy recommendations; and state laws and policies. In addition, the project resulted in significant communication among the many groups concerned with Indian education, the passing by various Indian organizations of resolutions supporting improved Indian education, and specific achievements in the target states. The task force made many advances in the area of interagency cooperation regarding Indian education. They concluded that more time was needed to create a firm advocacy role for Indian education legislation and policy making at the state level. (SB)

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INDIAN EDUCATION

Final Project Report

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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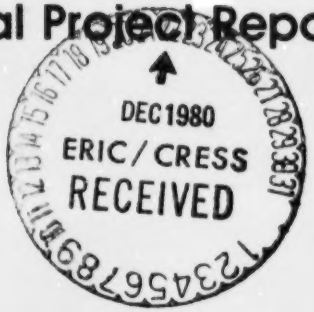
INDIAN EDUCATION

Final Project Report



Education Commission of the States
Denver, Colorado
Robert C. Andringa, Executive Director

Report No. 140

Indian Education Project
Lee Antell, Director
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November 1980

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The Indian Education Project of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) has two primary goals: (1) to identify and discuss the states' involvement in the education of Indian students; and (2) to suggest ways to coordinate federal, local and tribal activities so that state responsibilities to Indian education may be effectively met.

The five states that participated in the study are Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota. A national advisory task force composed of Indian and non-Indian leaders primarily from these states gathered and synthesized pertinent information about existing practices and programs. Through research and task force input and concurrence, the project staff will prepare and disseminate a series of project reports nationwide.

The task force will suggest program modifications – either through policy changes or the legislative process – that could be of value to the participating states, as well as to other states with Indian populations. In addition the project seeks to determine promising practices that can be shared.

The Education Commission of the States Task Force statements on Indian education stated herein recognize the federal trust responsibility established by the Congress of the United States through treaties made with Indian nations, legislation and court decisions. These precedents emphasize Indian sovereignty, Indian self-determination, and full involvement of the Indian communities at the local, state and national level in the establishment of educational policy for Indian citizens.

The Education Commission of the States Task Force also recognizes that the states have the primary responsibility to educate all Indian children and adults while the federal and tribal responsibility is to meet the unique educational and cultural needs of Indian students and adults.

It is further recognized that a cooperative effort between all groups concerned, regarding policy making and funding, must be implemented to achieve the full intent of this report – improved education for Indian people.

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Introduction

The Indian Education Project at the Education Commission of the States (ECS) — funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of Indian Education to begin on October 1, 1978 — officially began its tasks with the arrival of the project director, Lee Antell, on January 1, 1979. Due to end on May 30, 1980, the Indian Education Project received a "no-cost" extension to September 30, 1980.

Two primary project goals were (a) to identify and discuss the involvement of federal, tribal and state governments in the education of Indian children and (b) to assist states in fulfilling their responsibilities in Indian education. Five states — Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota — were selected for participation in the project, and a national task force composed of Indian and non-Indian leaders was chosen to help project staff perform the tasks necessary to clarify roles and to recommend changes in educational practices, policies and legislation necessary to improve education for Indian children.

Five reports covering involvement of the various entities — federal, tribal and state governments — problems in need of resolution, current educational practices, suggested program and policy recommendations, and existing state legislation have been prepared by project staff. These reports will be disseminated to a wide audience of Indian and non-Indian people throughout the nation.

In this summary report, major project goals and objectives are discussed in detail. Recommendations for future tasks are also articulated in this final report of the Indian Education Project.

Constitutional and Statutory Responsibilities for Indian Education

Research, Documentation and Publication

Duri g the first several months of the project, Indian Education staff lid extensive research on Indian Education. Sources utilized included previous national task force reports, court cases in various publications located in the state supreme court library, prior ECS discussions of Indian education, materials situated in the ECS Resource Center, and dialogue with others concerned about the education of Indian children.

A rough draft of *Indian Education: Involvement of Federal, State and Tribal Governments* was prepared for the first national task force meeting in Portland, Oregon. Chaired by Governor Atiyeh of Oregon, the spirited dialogue over the directions that Indian education should take, and who should be responsible for Indian education set the tone for the other meetings held at Rapid City, South Dakota; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Duluth, Minnesota; and Craig, Alaska. Defining involvement and responsibilities for tribal, federal and state entities proved to be a most demanding and involved assignment for the task force. Task force participants expressed the concern that project reports should emphasize the primary role of the Indian education of Indian children — a responsibility given to the states by the U.S. Constitution and the courts.

A number of Indian and non-Indian individuals, including educators, legislators and others involved with Indian education, joined the national task force meetings at various times. These individuals furnished important input on the issues concerned with the education of Indian children.

Tribal communities, Indian organizations including the National Indian Education Association, the National Congress of American Indians, and the National Tribal Chairmen's Association were

asked to respond to draft reports concerning the involvement of tribal, state and federal entities with Indian education. Representatives from state legislatures, state boards and departments of education, local education agencies, state Indian education directors, and others were also asked to document the desired and the constitutional/moral/legal involvement of these various government entities with Indian education.

Examining Divisions of Responsibility for Indian Education

Important data for the initial report was also gathered from participating states through a June/July 1979 survey of project staff with local education agencies, state legislatures, Indian education directors, state boards and departments of education, tribal leaders, Indian parents and children, and Indian communities in the five target states. This same survey also collected data on how involved states were with federal education programs, how extensive federal assistance was for the states, and what kinds of special state programs for Indian education benefited Indian students. In addition, state personnel with direct responsibility for Indian education and local education agency personnel responsible for Indian children were identified by this survey. Other materials concerned with Indian education, collected from the ECS resource center, state supreme court library and various Indian and non-Indian individuals were analyzed.

One other primary source of information for defining the involvement of state, federal and tribal entities with Indian education came from in-state task force meetings. Project staff designed and coordinated these meetings to determine how state educators, legislators, Indians and others concerned with the education of Indians perceived responsibilities and involvement in their states.

In-State Task Force Meetings

Two in-state task force meetings were held. These meetings were held in Rapid City, South Dakota and in Helena, Montana. At the Rapid City meeting, project staff members Lee Antell and George Williams joined to meet with Indian and non-Indian educators, legislators, school board members and others involved with and interested in defining roles and responsibilities. Issues included the lack of communication between state education agencies and tribal communities, the lack of tribal involvement in the decision-making process involved with the education of Indian children, the need for more Indian teachers and school administrators, and

other areas of concern. Recommendations included the need for tribal education codes, sophisticated data collection by the state department of education and local education agencies on Indian children, a need for multi-ethnic curriculum centers established by the state to collect and disseminate requested Indian education materials, the need for improved and expanded certification provedures for teachers, and the need for Indian teachers with modified credentials, the need for the expansion of the number of Indian teachers and school administrators, and the need for better communication between tribes and education agencies, and the shift of control over Indian education to Indian people.

Non-Indian people learned firsthand the concerns and frustrations of Indians about the education of their children. Indian individuals learned more about fiscal, legislative and other problems that prevent state and local education agencies and others from resolving Indian education issues.

The second in-state task force meeting was held at Helena, Montana on March 13-14, 1980. It was co-chaired by Ottis Hill of the governor's office and also an Indian Education Project national task force member; and by another member of this group, Stan Juneau, at that time vice chairman of the Blackfeet Tribe. Governor Thomas Judge addressed the assembled task force.

Participants addressed such issues as funding Indian education, policy changes that could be implemented at the state level and other issues. Recommendations included the need for creative solutions to finance public school construction on tax-exempt Indian reservation lands, demand for fully recognized and encouraged Indian-controlled community colleges, the necessity of holding statewide hearings on the state of Indian education, and a need for tribes to exert a greater influence over all public schools within reservation boundaries.

As a result of this meeting, the governor's office made a request to the legislature that an Office of Indian Education within the state Office of Public Instruction (OPI) be funded by the state. Meaningful dialogue between Indian and non-Indian individuals in attendance also increased and expanded their knowledge of each other and how they viewed the problems and concerns of Indians about the education of their children.

Institute for Educational Leadership Meetings

National task force members, project staff, Indian and non-Indian

legislators, educators and other interested persons were also involved in two seminars held in conjunction with regular task force meetings. The special seminars were held under the auspices of the Institute of Educational Leadership, an organization sponsored by George Washington University and funded by private sources.

The first seminar was held at Rapid City, South Dakota under the direction of Judy Olson, former president of the South Dakota State Board of Education. Dialogue centered around the issues involved with educational responsibilities and the education of Indian children, such as how to determine who is responsible for educating Indian children, how to reduce school dropouts, how to improve the involvement of Indians in the education of their children, and how to improve education opportunities for Indian children. Suggested remedies included more use of Indian teachers as role models, better communication between tribal communities and local/state education agencies, and more bilingual and bicultural Indian programs for both Indian and non-Indian children.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma was the site of the second Institute for Educational Leadership Seminar, under the direction of Gail Scott. National task force members and project staff members joined other interested individuals in a special discussion on Indian education presented by Minnesota State Senator Allan Spear. Senator Spear articulated a number of methods that states could use to improve education opportunities for Indian children, including a statewide needs assessment, legislation such as the Minnesota Indian Language and Culture Education Act that he helped to sponsor, and more involvement of Indian parents and communities in the education of Indian children.

As a result of these special seminars, Indian and non-Indian people in two of the target states for the project — South Dakota and Oklahoma — benefited greatly from dialogue that clearly defined the issues and solutions involved with the education of Indian children, and determined more thoroughly for participants what tribal, state and federal roles should be.

What emerged from research, documentation and evaluation of the responsibilities of the various government entities, tribal, state and federal, toward Indian education was that all of these agencies need more cooperative, interacting, and inclusive operational procedures and policies for the education of Indian children. Regardless of who has primary constitutional, legal and/or moral

responsibility for the education of Indian children, there is a critical need to revise the methods under which they are educated including more participation of Indians in the education of their children.

The initial project report was approved for distribution and dissemination at the April 1980 meeting in Duluth, Minnesota of the National Task Force for the Indian Education Project. Final input from tribal councils and Indian organizations across the country was solicited at this point and was included in the revised report.

Responsibilities — Problems and Practices

The July 1979 survey of five target states, Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota, also produced important information and data on (1) problems associated with existing divisions of responsibilities for Indian education and (2) program practices in the five "target" states. Two project reports were prepared through the information that was collected, analyzed and evaluated by the Indian Education Project.

The first of these two reports, *Indian Education: Problems in Need of Resolution*, articulated problems including a severe lack of Indian bilingual and bicultural programs, a drastic shortage of Indian teachers and school administrators, many insensitive non-Indian teachers and related staff, insufficient state and federal funds for Indian education programs, almost total absence of Indian involvement in education decision making involving Indian children and high Indian student dropout rates from the public school systems. Defining and interpreting involvement, roles and responsibilities also was cited by survey respondents.

Selected Programs and Practices

The second report was *Indian Education: Selected Programs and Practices.* The report discusses "selected" programs and practices in Indian education, at all levels of education, that were being utilized in various schools and achieving success. Particular emphasis on Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota schools is apparent in this report.

The report emphasized examples of statewide needs assessments of Indian students and programs, Indian operated and controlled schools, college teacher training programs, American Indian studies, bilingual and bicultural programs, and others. The

discussion also demonstrated that most Indian education programs were federally funded, and that many states did not have Indian bilingual and bicultural programs funded from state resources.

These reports have been approved for distribution and dissemination by the National Task Force for the Indian Education Project at the Education Commission of the States. They are available in limited quantities from the Publications Department at ECS at a cost of $3 for the first copy and 30¢ for additional copies.

Effective Alternative Programs: Dissemination and Implementation

Policy Recommendations

The fourth project report, *Indian Education: Policy Recommendations*, contains both legislative and policy recommendations. This report was prepared from recommendations made by the national task force. It also includes suggestions made by a task force subcommittee composed of Lee Antell, Ruth Myers, Harold Schreier, Dave Beaulieu and Sam Homan. Also included are recommendations suggested in earlier studies on Indian education and directives made by instate task force people in Montana and South Dakota, and from other sources. Recommendations include the need for more direct Indian involvement with the education of Indian children, improved communication between tribal communities and educators, more state and federal funding of Indian education programs, more Indian control of the education of their children, more Indian teachers and school administrators, and more state bilingual and bicultural Indian-oriented programs in the schools.

This report furnishes the basis for activity in the target states and in other states with significant Indian populations to affect changes in Indian education. The project director, Lee Antell, corresponded by telephone and letter with policy makers at the tribal, state and federal level to persuade them to work for significant legislative and policy changes in Indian education programs in schools at all levels of education.

Lee Antell also made presentations on Indian education policies at the National Indian Education Association meeting in December, the Chief State School Officers meeting in Washington and at other meetings. Reports and resolutions were also introduced and approved at the ECS annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

Throughout the life of the project, staff maintained close working

relationships with the participating states and with the national task force members. Consultative services to Indian education directors, state departments of education, and others interested in or involved with the education of Indian children was provided by the project director, Lee Antell. Updated information and data will be furnished to Indian and non-Indian educators, legislators, school board members, departments of education and others involved and concerned with Indian education by the fourth report, *Indian Education: Policy Recommendations.*

Policy Statements

The fifth report, *Indian Education: An Overview of State Laws and Policies* concentrated on a project goal to determine and articulate legislative and non-legislative changes that could be made in the states to improve education for Indian children. Only a few states have made non-legislative policy statements through which state boards and departments of education could work to improve Indian education. These states are California, Michigan, Montana, New York and Washington. South Dakota is in the process of considering a state policy statement on Indian education.

For instance, the California Department of Education has a policy statement that provides (1) each Indian child with equal access to educational opportunities, (2) program expansion and modification that clearly and fully recognizes the cultural uniqueness of American Indian children and (3) education that clearly addresses the special needs of Indian children.

Michigan has adopted policy statements that encourage school districts to incorporate appropriate American Indian cultural and heritage studies where Indians attend public schools, to require a minimal number of credits in Indian education for teachers instructing Indian children and to encourage and support workshops on Indian education for school administrators, teachers and counselors employed where Indian students attend school.

Montana has adopted a *Master Plan* calling for the development of programs in public schools that emphasize American Indian contributions and perspectives. The plan also encourages the recruitment and appointment of Indians to administrative and teaching positions, and stresses the preservation of American Indian languages as a basic and functional part of Indian culture.

New York has called for a statewide Native American Education

Advisory Committee, a greater voice for Indian people in the education of their children, effective affirmative action for Indians, expanded teacher training education in Indian culture and tradition, and curriculum to reflect the needs and concerns of Indian parents and their children.

South Dakota is in the process of considering a state department of education policy statement that calls for involvement of Indians on local education decision-making boards and committees, curriculum that reflects a true picture of the American Indian, inservice programs for American Indian paraprofessionals, expanded and improved affirmative action and recruitment policies for American Indians, and active participation of Indian parents and communities in local school district decision making on education matters. However, no formal adoption of this statement has been made to date.

The office of the state superintendent of Washington has issued a policy statement that calls for the special training of teachers of Indian students, career ladder training for Indian paraprofessionals and involvement of Indian parents and communities in the development and evaluation of all programs affecting their children.

The above policy statements are discussed at length in the fifth Indian Education project report, *Indian Education: An Overview of State Laws and Policies*, along with the state legislation that has been passed to this date.

Legislation

The state of Minnesota passed an "Indian Language and Culture Education Act" in 1977. Wisconsin passed a similar act recently, and states including California, Montana and New York have passed legislation that mandate the inclusion of Indian education programs and materials in the public schools. California has also established 10 indian technical centers across the state to work for the improvement of Indian education and employment of Indians.

All 50 states were surveyed during June 1980 by project staff to determine the basis of their commitment to Indian education legislation. Research indicates that only 16 states do not have any type of Indian-oriented education legislation. States with Indian education legislation have established departments or directors of Indian education, scholarships for Indian students, advisory

councils on Indian education, and limited bilingual and bicultural programs.

This material on legislation is discussed along with policy statements in the fifth report, *Indian Education: An Overview of State Laws and Policies.* The national task force has approved the report for dissemination and distribution. Project states and others interested in Indian education will receive copies of this report on legislation and policy statements.

Project Evaluation

Reports

Six reports on the state of the art of Indian education have been completed. They are

Indian Education: Involvement of Federal, State and Tribal Governments
Indian Education: Problems in Need of Resolution
Indian Education: Selected Programs and Practices
Indian Education: Policy Recommendations
Indian Education: An Overview of State Laws and Policies
Indian Education: Final Project Report

On the basis of these reports significant and relevant dialogue has already occurred between Indian and non-Indian individuals, organizations and agencies, including local education agencies, state boards and departments of education; legislators; tribal communities; state directors of Indian education; and others concerned with the education of Indian children.

Moreover, resolutions supporting project efforts to improve education have been passed by Indian and non-Indian organizations on the basis of project staff interaction, reports, and presentations at seminars, meetings and institutes on Indian education. Groups such as the National Congress of American Indians, the Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards, the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, the National Indian Education Association, American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Association of State Boards of Education, have indicated their support.

Task Force Meetings

Meetings were held in Portland, Oregon; Rapid City, South Dakota; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Duluth, Minnesota; and Craig, Alaska. With the exception of the first meeting chaired by Governor Atiyeh of Oregon, task force chairman, all meetings were chaired by task force vice chairman, William Demmert Jr.

Task force members contributed a wide variety of expertise to the sessions and worked successfully to make sure that project reports reflected a clear understanding of what involvement the various government entities — tribal, federal and state — should have in the education of Indian children.

Moreover, task force members helped to make project reports pertinent and relevant, made important suggestions about the education of Indian children and kept project staff aware of the need to unify many divergent opinions.

Other Meetings

Project staff participated in a number of meetings and seminars designed to promote their tasks of articulating how tribal, federal and state entities could improve the education of Indian children. One such meeting was a "state of the art" meeting sponsored by the National Indian Education Association in Denver on August 13-14, 1979. Indian education directors and others discussed and recommended changes in Indian education policy making at all levels of education. Lee Antell, project director, participated in this meeting on behalf of ECS.

On October 24-25, 1979, the Indian Education Project of the Education Commission of the States hosted a joint meeting that involved the U.S. Office of Education/Office of Indian Education and 17 state directors of Indian Education. Project staff played a catalyst role in bringing all these individuals together to discuss Title IV, Part A of the Indian Education Act of 1972. Sessions concentrated on how state departments of education could help local school districts, and how they could also work more effectively with the Office of Indian Education to monitor Title IV, Part A. Sessions were also held on how the Office of Indian Education could better work with state departments of education on this important Indian legislation.

A spirit of cooperation and understanding characterized this meeting of federal officials and state Indian education directors, chaired by the Indian Education Project Director, Lee Antell. State directors of Indian education stated that they would provide technical assistance to Title IV, Part A grantees in their states upon request. Interpretation of federal rules and regulations, however, would be left to the U.S. Department of Education/ Office of Indian Education. State directors also agreed to work with state departments of education to develop written policies on Indian education and to collect statistical data on Indian students.

The U.S. Office of Indian Education agreed to improve communication with the respective state departments of education.

Specific Accomplishments in Target States

Alaska. Staff met with the Commissioner of Education Marshall Lind and discussed needs of Alaska Natives and Indians in this state. Project personnel also met with Robert Davis, director of Indian Education, and Jeff Jeffers, special assistant to the commissioner, receiving their support of project activities.

Minnesota. Staff gained support of project efforts to improve Indian education from Governor Albert Quie and from his director of policy research, Robert Andringa, recently named executive director for the Education Commission of the States. Project staff promoted specific legislation in this state and also gained the support and assistance of Commissioner of Education Howard Casmey and State Senator Jerome Hughes, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, and of Senator Allan Spear, 1977 sponsor of Chapter 312, the "Indian Language and Culture Education Act." Personnel also gained support from President of the Minnesota State Board of Education Ruth Myers.

Montana. Staff met with Governor Thomas Judge and his staff assistants, Blake Wordal and Ottis Hill, gaining their support in implementing task force recommendations in that state. Project personnel also met with Thomas Thompson, Montana State Board of Education, and received his commitment to work for a written board policy on Indian education. John Richardson, executive director of the Montana State Board of Regents; Georgia Rice, superintendent of public instruction; and Bob Parsley, state director of Indian education for Montana, pledged their support in the implementation of task force recommendations in that state.

On April 23, 1980, Lee Antell, project director, gave the keynote address, "Quality Education for Indian Students", at the Montana Indian Education Conference.

Oklahoma. Staff has received project support from Bette Ward, special assistant to the governor for education; also from Leslie Fisher, chief state school officer and from Sam Homan, state director of Indian Education. Hollis Roberts, a state legislator and chief of the Choctaw Nation and State Senator Herbert Rozelle, who represents a large Indian population, agreed to support task force recommendations. Project staff participated in the Oklahoma caucus at the National Indian Education Conference in

Denver, December 3, 1979, suggested that the Oklahoma State Department of Education request state financial support for its office of Indian education and persuaded the Oklahoma State Department of Education to hold public hearings on the status of Indian education in May 1980.

South Dakota. Staff gained project support from Harris Wollman, secretary of educational and cultural affairs and from James Hanson, chief state school officer; legislative support from State Senator Harold Schreier. Staff also worked with Judy Olson to hold an IEL seminar that brought state policy makers, legislators, Indian people and the project staff together. In addition, Lee Antell, project director, addressed the South Dakota Indian Education conference in October 1979; project staff persuaded the state department of elementary and secondary education to work on a written policy statement on Indian education.

Related Accomplishments

- Resolutions supporting project activities were received from the National Congress of American Indians, the Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards, the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the South Dakota Indian Education Association, Oregon Commission on Indian Services, the National Education Association and the Northwest Affiliated Tribes.

- Lee Antell, project director, spoke before the Chief State School Officers Subcommittee on Indian Education at their meeting on June 2, 1980. He spoke on recommendations to states for improved Indian education.

- Stimulated by project activities, timely recommendations on Indian education are being discussed by tribes and state-level policy makers.

- Task force meetings and related IEL seminars, along with instate task force meetings in Montana and South Dakota have generated suggested policy changes and project recommendations.

- Lee Antell, project director for Indian Education, provided testimony on Indian education at various Indian and non-Indian meetings — including the Council of Chief State School Officers, National Advisory Council on Indian Education, National Con-

gress of American Indians and others. Project staff made presentations before the Minnesota Indian Education conference and at other state meetings. Awareness of the complex issues were the focus of these presentations and staff members believe they accomplished this task.

- Project staff also interacted with government officials at all levels; with Indian and non-Indian educators; with legislators, with state boards and departments of education; with tribal councils, tribal education committees, Indian education directors, parents and students. They were able to inform and make many individuals aware of the need to provide more educational opportunities for Indian children.

Conclusions

- Twenty months was not enough time to create a firm advocacy role for Indian education legislation and policy making at the state level.

- Important strides, however, in terms of Indian and non-Indian interaction and awareness of each other's concerns were made by project staff and task force.

- The Indian Education Project at the Education Commission of the States provided impetus and direction for important dialogue between the Office of Indian Education and state directors of Indian education; between non-Indian and Indian individuals and organizations; between legislators, educators and Indians; between state superintendents and state boards of education, and others. This interaction has already created important communications channels in at least two states — Montana and South Dakota. Stimulated by project activities, moreover, important recommendations on the involvement, roles and responsibilities of tribal, state and federal entities are being defined more cohesively than ever before by Indian and non-Indian policy makers and decision makers. State and federal officials are more aware, too, of the concerns that Indian people have about the education of Indian children, and how they believe the federal government can work with the states to improve their educational opportunities.

- Project staff have also helped identify appropriate actions that the five "target" states — Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota — can take to improve the education of Indian children.

- Project influence may well extend beyond the life of their activity through reports that will have direct application to the improvement of Indian education throughout all 50 states and through a reaffirmed commitment of ECS at the annual 1980 meeting to the continued improvement of educational opportunities for Indian children.

- The project began its task of becoming an advocate for Indian legislation by informing the states represented in the project about the still unmet needs in the education of Indian children.

Recommendations for Future Action

Were the Indian Education Project to be continued, project activities should focus on

State Implementation of Recommended Indian Education Policies, Legislation, Programs and Practices

To increase educational opportunities for Indian children by suggesting that state boards of education, state departments of education and legislatures implement policies, legislation, programs and practices, such as those proposed by our project task force, that address the needs and concerns of Indian pupils.

National Implementation

To communicate with Congress, appropriate federal agencies, Indian tribes, national education organizations and other groups, to expand their awareness of and commitment to educational opportunities for Indian children at all levels of education.

Tribal Involvement in Indian Education

To involve Indian tribes, communities, parents and other concerned Indian citizens in the improvement of the education of Indian children at the state and local levels and assist educators to suggest the development of programs that will insure success for Indian students and positive practices in the schools.

Implementation of Task Force Recommendations

Expand the impact of the Indian education project at state, tribal and federal levels through active utilization of the individual state structures, national contacts, ECS Commissioners and projects affiliated with the Education Commission of the States.

To achieve these goals, project staff would

- Make individual visits to legislators, educators, tribes and

others concerned with the education of Indian children and share task force recommendations and legislative suggestions with them. Project staff would also provide consultative services and focus with states on the needs and concerns that Indian people have about the education of their children, including the consideration of programs, practices, policies and legislation that would improve Indian education. Project staff would also visit and encourage local, regional and national education and political associations to support project efforts to improve Indian education.

- Use task force recommendations to raise the political profile for Indian people in the area of education at federal, state and local levels. Personnel would focus at the national level on meeting and working with appropriate federal agencies and individuals and with Congress to seek discussion on changes in federal policies and legislation that would improve Indian educational opportunities. Staff would make personal visitations and make presentations focusing on the encouragement of national Indian and non-Indian organizations to support, endorse and work for the implementation of task force recommendations on Indian education.

- Project staff would work to involve tribal communities and Indian parents in education policy making and to inform both Indians and non-Indians about the problems associated with the education of Indian children. Staff would gather, analyze and disseminate information on Indian education problems, concerns, strengths and weaknesses; hold regional conferences on Indian education; meet with and encourage educators, legislators, Indian people and others to involve Indian parents and communities in education policy making; encourage target states to implement programs and practices designed to improve education for Indian children, as suggested by the tribes.

- The Indian Education Project would finally encourage the Education Commission of the States, utilizing its efforts and that of the Indian Education Project and Task Force, to improve Indian education in the five participating states of Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota, as well as in additional states. Project staff could meet and share recommendations with ECS Commissioners in project-related meetings, encourage official ECS support by involving the executive staff in working for the implementation of task force recommendations, and by compiling a resource bank of Indian and non-Indian people concerned with Indian education that would be utilized to maintain communication.

A strong advocacy role for the Indian Education Project continued by the Education Commission of the States could result in significant improvement of Indian education in many ways as suggested in this final project report.

Indian Education reports available from the ECS Publications Department:

Report No. 135
Indian Education: Involvement of Federal, State and Tribal Governments

Report No. 136
Indian Education: Problems in Need of Resolution

Report No. 137
Indian Education: Selected Programs and Practices

Report No. 138
Indian Education: Policy Recommendations

Report No. 139
Indian Education: An Overview of State Laws and Policies

Report No. 140
Indian Education: Final Project Report

Additional copies of these reports may be obtained from the Publications Department, Education Commission of the States, Suite 300, 1860 Lincoln St., Denver, Colorado 80295. Please enclose $3 for the first report ordered. For each subsequent copy of any report listed above, please add 30¢. This price covers postage and handling. Prepayment required.